

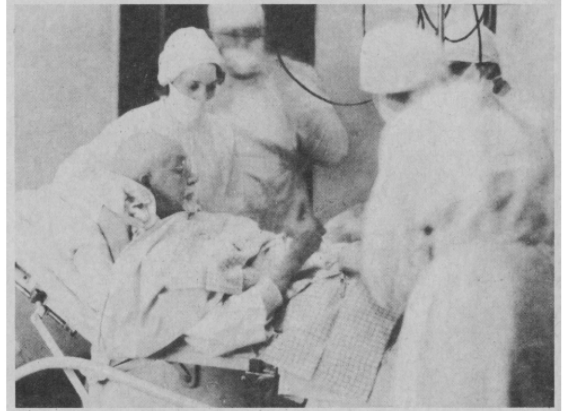
# Taking Calculated Risks

Dr. Evan O'Neill Kane, chief surgeon of the Kane Summit Hospital in New York, had been fascinated for years by the possibility of using local anesthetics in areas where general anesthetics had traditionally been used.

He was especially eager to discover if an appendectomy could be performed with only a local.

After performing nearly 4,000 such operations in his four decades as a surgeon, Dr. Kane was confident that the operation was suitable for local anesthesia, but it was tough to find someone willing to stay awake through such a surgery.

Then on Feb. 15, 1921, he found such a patient. He prepped the patient, then deftly removed the troublesome appendix. The patient felt no pain and recovered nicely. The operation was considered an overwhelming success.



Dr Kane performing the autoherniorrhaphy. (Photo courtesy of AP/Wide World Photos.)

The patient was none other than Dr. Kane himself. He had succeeded in removing his own appendix under local anesthetic, thus paving the way for many patients to have similar operations, without the complications and difficulties sometimes experienced with general anesthesia. It was a risky move, certainly, but not an uncalculated one.

The lesson? The risk you take today may give many a bright tomorrow.

*The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty (Proverbs 21:5).*

– Beecher Hunter